

[Ms. BROWN of Florida, addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

TAX RELIEF NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. NEUMANN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NEUMANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to call attention to how far this Congress has come. In order to truly understand how much this Nation has changed over the last couple of years, since 1995, when there was a change of who was running this place out here, I think it is important we go back to the pre-1995 years and talk about what it was that made the American people so cynical, almost to a point that when somebody out of Washington says "here's what we're going to do," nobody believes him. I thought I would start with the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act of 1985.

This was back in the middle 1980's, when Congress started promising the American people a balanced budget. I was not here. I watched this thing very closely from the outside. I was a taxpayer building a business from the ground up at that point in time, working hard every day, and I watched this promise. I watched them promise us that they were going to balance the budget. Their promise was along this blue line in this chart. What they actually did is they followed the red line in this chart.

As my colleagues can see, their promises did not hold up. As a matter of fact, instead of getting to a balanced budget as originally promised in 1991, the deficits exploded. What did they do? They did the Washington thing, and many people in America, myself included, got even more upset with them. They put a new Gramm-Rudman-Hollings bill out. Since they could not meet the first one, they made up a new one. The second one had a blue line again. The blue line shows their promised route to a balanced budget, and the red line shows again what actually happened. The deficit exploded. Why did that happen? They could not curtail the growth of Government spending in Washington. They just plain could not resist reaching into your pocket, taking more money out and spending more money out here in Washington. There was a fundamental belief out here that the people in Washington knew better how to spend the American people's money than they knew how to spend it themselves.

This is kind of what was going on before 1995. We had the promise in 1985, the promise again in 1987, several more promises along the way. We got to 1993, and in 1993 they said we really do have to get this deficit under control, we know we have made these promises repeatedly so what we are going to do, they decided in 1993, this was the past again, they said we are going to raise

taxes on the American people to try and get us closer to a balanced budget. It was the closest vote they have ever seen in this House. In both the House of Representatives and in the Senate, that tax increase that raised the gasoline tax and the Social Security tax, that 1993 tax increase, the biggest tax increase in American history, passed each House by one single, solitary vote. The American people rejected that, because in 1994, they said, "We're sick of the broken promises and we're tired of the tax increases. Washington should not be reaching into our pocket and taking more money out to try and get to a balanced budget."

In 1995, they elected a new group to Congress. They elected the Republicans to take over. The Republicans got here and they made a promise to the American people, too. We laid out a 7-year plan to get to a balanced budget. We are now in the third year of that 7-year plan, and this may very well be the best kept secret in Washington. We are in the third year of our 7-year plan to balance the budget and we are not only on track, but ahead of schedule.

In fiscal year 1996, this red column shows what was promised to the American people. This is the Republican promise of 1995 to the American people. We not only met that target, but the deficit was actually lower. As we started down our track to a balanced budget, the first year was in, and we hit the target.

This is what was promised to the American people in the second year, this red column. The blue column shows where we actually were. We have got 2 years under our belt now not only on track, but ahead of schedule.

Today what we are passing is the third year in this plan, and the third year in this plan is once again on track and ahead of schedule. We are in the third year of a 7-year plan to balance the Federal budget and, very different than the previous Congress, very, very different, we are not only on track but ahead of schedule.

How did all this happen? How did all of this come about? It came about because instead of reaching into the pockets of the American people and taking more money out through tax increases, instead of doing this, the new group that came here in 1995 said it would be a whole lot better if we curtailed the growth of Government spending. If we just controlled the Government spending habits out here in Washington, we would not need to raise taxes to be on track and ahead of schedule in balancing the budget, and that is what we did. Two years into this program, we have reduced the growth of Government spending by over 40 percent. We have literally got our arms around and curtailed the growth of Government spending to a point where today we passed a bill that is going to balance the budget at least by 2002, and we are tomorrow going to pass a bill that allows tax cuts for the American people.

I hear a lot of rhetoric about these tax cuts, but I know the middle-income folks understand what these tax cuts are. In a family of five, the people we see in church every Sunday, those folks know what the tax cuts are. They know if they have got three kids at home, one headed off to college, that they stand to receive \$1,000 for the two kids, \$500 for each one of them still home, and \$1,500 for the one that is going off to college. They do not understand all this class warfare rhetoric, but they sure understand what the tax cuts are. It is a great time for America when we have not only balanced the budget but provided additional tax relief for the American people.

BUDGET RECONCILIATION TAX PROPOSALS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, the tax bill that we are here discussing and in particular the tax bill under the reconciliation package looks good on its face. Federal taxes are cut by a total of \$133 billion over 5 years. I believe the American people deserve and want a tax cut. But the devil is in the details of the tax bill. The bill has a phased-in \$500 per child tax credit. This is a very important and most needed credit. Most Americans would certainly want that and embrace that. But the bill does not allow the credit before an earned income tax calculation. What does that mean? It means that low-income, struggling working people would therefore not get the same benefit that most Americans would get because they would be denied to have that opportunity as those who make more. Some 28 million children would be denied this tax credit because they do not earn enough money to get a tax break.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the American people would be quite surprised to know, if some have their way, that the days of tax relief only for those who do not need tax relief are not over.

The bill provides for estate tax relief. Again, this is a very welcome initiative that farmers and small businesspersons in my State have been seeking for a long time. But here again the bill phases that relief in, \$20,000 a year over 15 years, while immediate and more relief to working families is needed. They need a faster phase-in. That kind of relief really amounts to no relief for low and moderate income working families. They need help now. For generations, these families have struggled to maintain their family farms or their family-owned business, only to face the loss of them when the head of the family passes, and they are unable to pay the estate taxes because their liquid assets are limited.

And with regard to HOPE scholarships, a similar pattern emerges. Under the bill, working families would get \$600 in relief, not the \$1,500 that was

just spoken about. That amount of money does not go far enough to help those families struggling to send their children to college.

The Democratic substitute, however, offers a better plan for lower and middle income families. In HOPE credits, they get \$1,100 in tax relief. Estate tax relief is more in keeping with the realities of family-owned businesses. It is phased in at a faster rate and not over a 15-year period. And working families could still take advantage of the \$500 tax credit. You do not deny poor working families that which you allow all other families to have.

In addition, the Democratic substitute sets a cap on capital gains. Most people want capital gains. But again a reasonable and a prudent approach given our budget goal is what is needed. And it does not index capital gains to inflation.

It is clear, Mr. Speaker, under close inspection, that the Democratic substitute is far more favorable to low and middle-income working families than the tax bill that will soon be before us that we will vote on tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, working families in America indeed need tax relief. They want it and they should have it. But they need it now and they need a fair one. I submit that the Democratic substitute provides that necessary relief. The tax bill does not.

MFN FOR CHINA, AID TO BOSNIA IN FLOOD RELIEF BILL, AND DISNEY BOYCOTT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee [Mr. DUNCAN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to mention three very important but unrelated topics. One is the vote yesterday to grant most-favored-nation status to China. Last year 141 Members voted against MFN status for China. Yesterday 173 voted against this status. This is an issue that is not going to go away and the opposition will continue to grow if the Chinese do not make major reforms and start doing better in relation to human rights. The Chinese should not take yesterday's vote as some type of endorsement of their very repressive policies. This is particularly true in relation to the horrible persecution of millions of Christians going on in China right now.

Michael Horowitz, a leader in speaking out against this persecution and who happens to be Jewish, said in a recent interview with Chuck Colson the following. He said, "I am speaking out on behalf of persecuted Christians precisely because I am a Jew in the most deeply rooted sense. I see eerie parallels between the way the elites of the world are dealing with Christians—who have become the scapegoats of choice for the thug regimes around the world—and the way the elites dealt with the Jews when Hitler came to power. Another parallel is the tongue-

tied silence of the Christian community in the face of this persecution. A similar silence was evident in the years leading to the Holocaust. Silence, anybody's silence, in the face of persecution is deadly. So for me," Mr. Horowitz said, "sparking our campaign for awareness and action is the most important thing I expect to do. What thugs did to Jews, they are doing now to Christians. I put it to you, Chuck," Mr. Horowitz said, "Christians are becoming the Jews of the 21st century."

Also, the Chinese must start treating us more fairly in regard to trade. We have a trade deficit with China now at 40 to \$50 billion, depending on whose estimate is used. Economists say conservatively that we lose 20,000 jobs per \$1 billion. This means we may be losing as many as 1 million American jobs this year to China and we are losing even more to Japan. We cannot continue these huge trade deficits and resulting huge job losses, Mr. Speaker, for much longer without doing great harm and irreparable harm to this Nation. Already while our unemployment rate is very low, our underemployment rate is terrible. As I have said before, we are ending up with the best educated waiters and waitresses in the world precisely because we are sending so many good jobs to other countries.

Secondly, and briefly, Mr. Speaker, it was unconscionable to require us to vote for \$2 billion more for Bosnia on the so-called flood relief bill. We sent far more to Bosnia than we did to North Dakota. There is no threat to our national security in Bosnia. There is no vital U.S. interest there. We cannot settle these centuries-old ethnic conflicts even if we pour our entire treasury into Bosnia. We need to put our own people first. We do not need our soldiers and sailors doing international social work. We need to bring our troops home now. I was very disappointed that yesterday we voted down the Hilleary amendment to bring our troops home by December 31. The President originally promised we would have our troops out after one year at the most and that was many months ago.

Third, Mr. Speaker, and lastly, the Hill newspaper reported today that no Members were willing to publicly support the Southern Baptists in their boycott of the Disney Company. Well, I know this boycott will not be successful against this extremely rich corporation. However, I for one, and I am a Presbyterian, not a Baptist, admire and respect the Southern Baptists for standing up for their beliefs and for trying to do what they and millions of people believe is morally right. We need much less sex and violence on television and in our movies and the Disney Corporation is not upholding family values as it once did.

TAXPAYER RELIEF ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentle-

woman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because we are about to take up a bill called by the Republican the Taxpayer Relief Act. If you look closely at this bill, a better name would be "The Rich get Richer Act."

This is no secret, Mr. Speaker. It's in all the newspapers, it's Republican payback time. It's no secret who the members on the other side of the aisle represent. More than half the benefits of the Republicans tax plan go to people who make an average of \$250,000 a year. The next 25% of their tax breaks go to those making more than \$75,000.

And who gets the crumbs, Mr. Speaker. Who is shortchanging the American working families? As is the usual case when the Republicans talk about relief, they talk about helping their wealthy friends. They are now working to cut taxes on the profits made from the sale of stocks and bonds beyond the amount of taxes paid on wages, they are working to end the corporate alternative minimum tax, they are working to give IRA tax preferences to the top 20% of taxpayers, and they are working hard to cut the taxes on estates that would benefit the top 2% of estates.

Mr. Speaker, the numbers are clear for the Republicans. Help the high incomes, help those in the highest tax brackets and the Republican know that they can help themselves. They know that the big corporations will help them if they end the alternative minimum tax so some of our largest corporations can avoid paying any taxes again. We closed this loophole some time ago and now they want to open it up again. It is no secret who is dancing with the Republicans, where their bread is buttered.

This is the party that cuts out working Americans making less than \$15,900, 15 million working, tax paying wage-earners who the Republicans say are getting welfare if they are given the same \$500 per child tax credit that Republicans say their friends making more than \$250,000 should get.

Let's do the Republican math-make less than \$15,900 and you don't need a \$500 per child tax credit-make more than \$250,000 and you do need the same tax credit. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to see where the Republicans are coming from.

In my own district, in the 18th Congressional District in Texas, the median household income is about \$22,000 a year. Will the Republican bill help most of them? Will the tax cuts they are proposing help the majority of my constituents? Will the Republican cuts help the majority of American? How much do the Republicans think the American people will stand for?

This is where the American people can see the clear differences between the Democrats and the Republicans. The Democratic plan—the plan authored by the distinguished Ranking Member of the Ways and Means Committee, Representative CHARLES RANGEL—is a plan that gives tax relief where it is need-to working families, hard working taxpaying families.

The Democratic alternative calls for three-quarters of their tax breaks going to people making less than \$58,000 a year. There are tax cuts for small business owners, there are tax credits for the parents of all of our children, there are tax breaks for families that are trying to send their children to college. Sure,